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STATEMENT OF JAMES A. CROCE
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NextEnergy supports the adoption of at least a 10% Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by the end of 2015 for Michigan, as contained in House Bill 4562 sponsored by Rep. Frank Accavitti.

Michigan's electric energy future is at a crossroads. Conventional policy would be to build more fossil fueled facilities and ignore the opportunity for more of our electric power to come from renewable fuels.

Conventional policy advocates choose to disregard escalating fossil fuel prices that we can expect to see going forward. These additional future costs—for air pollution controls, probable carbon policy, and major investments to upgrade an aging coal infrastructure—must be factored in for the life of any conventional fossil fuel project.

In cooperation with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, NextEnergy has completed an economic impacts assessment for the state of Michigan quantifying the net effect of renewable energy and energy efficiency programs to Michigan's economy. The results of this study clearly indicate that a RPS as high as 15% by 2025 has favorable impacts to both employment and gross state product as compared to the status quo of limiting generation resources to coal only.

NextEnergy is a member of the Michigan Sustainable Energy Coalition (MSEC), a group comprised of renewable energy developers, environmental groups, agricultural interests, labor unions and others related to the growing business of renewable energy. We believe that now is the time to begin meeting future energy demands with a growing mix of sustainable and renewable energy resources. At the same time, we acknowledge that some fossil-based systems may be necessary into the future.

Advancing a plan for renewable energy in Michigan will provide us with energy security, energy diversity, a healthier environment and a boost to badly needed economic development.

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